

Message Text

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SUBJ: NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE ON TANZANIAN PERMREP SALIM,
NOVEMBER 25

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF WILLIAM SAFIRE'S COLUMN ON
OP ED PAGE OF NEW YORK TIMES, NOV. 25:

THE MOST SUCCESSFUL DIPLOMAT OPERATING IN THE WORLD TODAY IS
SALIM A. SALIM, AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS OF THE
UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA WHO? OF WHERE?

AMBASSADOR SALIM, NOW ONLY 32, SERVED AS HIS COUNTRY'S
AMBASSADOR TO EGYPT TEN YEARS AGO; IN THE LATE SIXTIES HE
OPERATED IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA AND IN NORTH
KOREA. AT THE UNITED NATIONS, HE CHAIRS THE COMMITTEE ON
DECOLONIZATION AND IS REGARDED AS THE MOST ADROIT OF THE
AFRICAN DIPLOMATS.

HE REPRESENTS TANZANIA, A YOUNG SOCIALIST STATE FORMED BY THE
AMALAGAM OF TANGANYIKA AND THE ISLAND OF ZANZIBAR, ON THE
LOWER EAST SIDE OF AFRCIA. THE POPULATION OF ZANZIBAR
IS ONE THIRD ARAB AND MR. SALIM IS AT ONCE AN AFRICAN,
A MOSLEM A FAR LEFTIST, WITH EXPERIENCE IN COMMUNIST AND
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ARAB CAPITALS,AND THERE ARE NOT MANY MEN FLUENT IN SWAHILI AND

ENGLISH WHO CAN PRESENT THAT COMBINATION.

ACCORDING TO HIGH OFFICIALS AT THE UNITED NATIONS, IT WAS MR. SALIM'S ACTIVE BRIDGE-BUILDING BETWEEN THE AFRICAN, ARAB AND COMMUNIST NATIONS THAT HELPED BRING ABOUT THE MOST STUNNING DEAL IN THE HISTORY OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY; THE ARABS AND COMMUNISTS JOINED THE AFRICANS IN SUSPENDING SOUTH AFRICA, AND THE AFRICANS AND THE COMMUNISTS JOINED THE ARABS IN RECOGNIZING THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION.

THE UNSEATING OF A CHARTER MEMBER AND THE RECOGNITION OF A NON-STATE IS, BY ANY ACCOUNT, A STRIKING DIPLOMATIC MANEUVER. WHEN HENRY KISSINGER, TRUSTING EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT ANWAR EL-SADAT, WAS PASSING THE WORD NOT TO WORRY ABOUT THE ARAB CONFERENCE AT RABAT, MR. SALIM WAS GETTING AND GIVING COMMITMENTS BASED ON A READING EXACTLY TO THE CONTRARY.

AFTER RABAT, THE AFRICANS DELIVERED THEIR SUPPORT AND INVITATION OF YASIR ARAFAT OF THE PLO. TO ADDRESS THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY; TWO DAYS BEFORE MR. ARAFAT ARRIVED, THE ARABS VOTED TO SUPPORT THE RULING AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA'S SEATING BY THE ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT, WHO HAPPENS TO BE ALGERIA'S FOREIGN MINISTER. THE CHINESE COMMUNISTS JOINED THE ORCHESTRATION; AMONG OTHER REASONS, MR. SALIM HAD ONCE HELPED THEM EXPEL TAIWAN.

AS A RESULT, THE ATMOSPHERE AT THE UNITED NATIONS TODAY IS SIMILAR TO THE EUPHORIA OF THE DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION OF 1972. IN MIAMI THAT YEAR, QUOTA SYSTEMS THRUST MINORITIES FORWARD, THE WINNING DELEGATES HAD A GRAND TIME, POLITICAL ESTABLISHMENTS ALONG WITH BIG LABOR WERE INSULTED AND WALKED AWAY, AND DISASTER SOON DESCENDED ON THE CELEBRANTS, WHO THEN LEARNED THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A APATY AND A PARTY.

AT THE UNITED NATIONS, THE THIRD WORLD DELEGATES ARE ACTING AS IF THEY ARE A REFLECTION OF THE REAL WORLD'S POWER. THEY ARE NOT; THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IS THE "FORUM," THE PLACE WHERE SMALL NATIONS CAN USE MORAL SUASION AND PUBLICITY TO MODIFY SECURITY COUNCIL DECISIONS.

HERE STANDS THE UNITED STATES, RESOLUTELY BACKED BY ICELAND
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AND BOLIVIA (LET'S ALL BUY FISH IN TINS), WONDERING WHAT TO DO WITH A RUNAWAY GENERAL ASSEMBLY. SOME UNITED STATES POLICYMAKERS HAVE BEEN GOING OVER THE ALTERNATIVES:

1. PULL OUT OF THE UN. THE SOVIETS WALKED OUT ONCE, AND THE UNITED STATES WAS ABLE TO USE A UNITED NATIONS FLAG TO COUNTER THE INVASION OF SOUTH KOREA. THEY WON'T DO THAT AGAIN AND NEITHER SHOULD WE, IF ONLY TO RETAIN OUR VETO POWER.

2. STOP PAYING ITS BILLS. THE UNITED STATES HAS BEEN A PRIMARY FINANCIAL SUPPORTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND MANY AMERICANS THINK THE WHOLE SHEBANG WOULD FOLD UP IF WE WITHHOLD OUR "ASSESSMENTS," AS THE SOVIETS SOMETIMES HAVE. THOSE DAYS ARE GONE; IF WE DECLINE TO ANTE UP, THE ARABS WILL HAPPILY PICK UP THE TAB, PERHAPS WITH A GENEROUS, "YOU GOT LUNCH."

3. MOVE IT TO ZANZIBAR. THIS HAS ITS WISTFUL APPEAL, AND NELSON ROCKEFELLER IS NOT EXACTLY BRAGGING TO THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE THAT HIS FAMILY DONATED THE MANHATTAN REAL ESTATE TO THEUN, BUT NEW YORK WOULD DO WELL TO REMAIN THE WORLD CAPITAL.

4. HUMOR IT ALONG. THIS IS THE ALTERNATIVE THE UNITED STATES WILL PROBABLY CHOOSE. INSTEAD OF POLITICKING TO PICK UP VOTES, WE WILL TREAT THE VOTING AS INCONSEQUENTIAL; INSTEAD OF WORKING WITHIN THE UN. ON MATTERS OF SUBSTANCE, WE WILL DEAL DIRECTLY WITH OTHER POWERS, WHICH IS MORE OR LESS THE WAY WE HAVE OPERATED IN THE PAST. NOW WE WILL STOP PRETENDING THAT THE UNITED NATIONS IS IMPORTANT WHEN IT IS NOT.

THE TRAGEDY IS THAT THE UNITED NATIONS SHOULD BE QUITE IMPORTANT IN ONE AREA: PEACEKEEPING AMONG SMALL NATIONS IN AN INFLAMMABLE WORLD. BY ITS NEW DISRESPECT FOR SOVEREIGNTY, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY HAS OFFERED ITSELF AS THE PETRI DISH OF CONFLICT. THE BODY THAT WAS FORMED TO HELP SMALL NATIONS KEEP THE GREAT POWERS FROM MAKING WAR IS NOW MAKING IT DIFFICULT FOR GREAT POWERS TO KEEP SMALL NATIONS FROM STARTING WARS.

DIPLOMATS AND POLITICIANS CAN SALAAM MR. SALIM'S PROFESSIONAL DEFTNESS IN PUTTING TOGETHER THE DEALS THAT LED TO THIS MONTH'S VICTORY OVER THE UN.-AND THE ORGANIZATION THAT COULD STILL BE HELPFUL IN AVERTING WORLD WAR III HAS BEEN MADE THE BREEDING UNCLASSIFIED

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GROUND FOR THE THIRD WORLD'S WAR. UNQTE
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